Union of Concerned Scientists
Citizens and Scientists for Environmental Solutions

Hearing on Wind on State Lands
Comments of John Rogers, Union of Concerned Scientists
Pittsfield, MA, June 24, 2009

Thank you. My name is John Rogers and I'm a senior energy analyst with the Union of Concerned Scientists.

A sign-on letter compiled by UCS last year and signed by more than 1700 scientists and economists, including 145 in Massachusetts, calls for "swift and deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions."[1] In considering our state's role in achieving those swift and deep cuts, and the role that state facilities and lands should play, it is appropriate to discuss, as the February report does, energy efficiency, as a key resource. It is also important to talk about developing in parallel our renewable energy resources. No credible projection of how we respond to the serious challenge of climate change—how we achieve "swift and deep cuts"—suggests that we can do it without displacing serious amounts of fossil fuel use in the electricity sector through promoting and developing renewable energy in addition to and at the same time as we make a concerted push to tap our energy efficiency potential.[2]

A report released last month by UCS, *Climate 2030: A national blueprint for a clean energy economy*,[3] shows how a comprehensive set of smart policies can efficiently and effectively jump-start our country's transition to a more sustainable energy future. Our analysis shows more than half of the needed cuts in heat-trapping emissions by 2030 coming from the electricity sector, with energy efficiency meeting fully a third of projected demand. Of the remaining energy needs, renewable energy would meet a major portion (40 percent); wind, as the most cost-effective supply option in many cases, would be the biggest contributor.

In the case of Massachusetts, meeting the demand for swift and deep reductions will mean realizing opportunities that exist across the state, in energy efficiency and renewable energy,

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[1] *U.S. Scientists and economists' call for swift and deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions*, available at www.ucsusa.org/climateletter.

[2] A set of principles on balancing renewable energy development and land conservation (see attached), agreed to be a range of conservation-oriented groups, stresses that energy efficiency will be key but insufficient to meet the challenge of making the transition to a sustainable future given the challenge of climate change:

> "Clean, renewable energy generation must be developed and deployed immediately to assist in this transition. A robust national clean energy strategy must include very ambitious efficiency gains in our buildings, appliances, industries and transportation, as well as continued public education to reduce energy consumption. However, *new sources of power will be required and the nation must aggressively develop clean renewable sources to meet demand* including replacing carbon emitting sources of energy…" ("Key Principles: Balancing Renewable Energy Development and Land Conservation in a Warming World," June 15, 2009; emphasis added).

[3] Available at www.ucsusa.org/blueprint.

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through small-scale and large-scale installations, in and on private homes and businesses and lands, and in and on public buildings and public lands.

With regard to state-owned lands, I appreciate having the findings in the February report on renewable energy and energy efficiency opportunities[4] to take us further down the path of understanding the potential opportunities. I also appreciate the many caveats included in that report and its cover letter, about the analysis being "strictly theoretical," such opportunities being "subject to the typical economic and environmental considerations that accompany project development," about the need for more studies to "take into account site-specific constraints."

Now we need to figure out how to go from the theoretical to the tangible, to convert as many of those possibilities as make sense into actual clean energy from state lands as soon as possible. And the assessment of what makes sense must take into account a range of considerations, including economics, our energy needs, and the environment—the full range of environmental considerations, including our responsibility to preserve our natural resources and respond to climate change with strong efforts at mitigation right here in the commonwealth. Any overly narrow consideration of opportunities serves us poorly—any assessment that does not, for example, look at the broader energy picture, including our tremendous dependence on fossil fuels, or that fails to account for climate change and the tremendous likely costs of inaction, including on our precious natural resources. We need swift and deep cuts in emissions, and we need renewable energy on state-owned lands to be a significant part of achieving those.

Thank you.

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[4] Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs/Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, *Commonwealth of Massachusetts Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Potential at State-Owned Facilities and Lands*, February 20, 2009.